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AN INSTANCE OF MILTON'S DEBT TO VERGIL.

IT has been suggested (Raleigh, *Milton*, p. 140) that in his memories of the Long Parliament Milton found examples of the types he has embodied under the names of Belial, Mammon, Moloch, and Beelzebub in the second book of *Paradise Lost*. Stopford Brooke thinks (*Milton*, p. 93) that we may in the portrayal of Beelzebub trace the lineaments of Strafford. Without questioning the interest and value of these suggestions, I should like to point out that Milton's memories of Vergil may have furnished him with at least one example of the type he has embodied under the name of Belial. It will be remembered that the eleventh book of the *Aeneid* contains a scene somewhat similar to that of the infernal council in Milton's second book. The chiefs of Latium have met to discuss the advisability of continuing the war with the hitherto victorious Trojans. The second speaker is Drances, who is described thus (11. 336-342):

Tum Drances, idem infensus, quem gloria Turni
Obliqua invidia stimulisque agitabat amaris,
Largus opum et lingua melior, sed frigida bello
Dextera, consiliis habitus non futilis auctor,
Seditione potens
Surgit, et his onerat dictis atque aggerat iras.

Turning to *Paradise Lost* (2. 108-118), we find:

On the other side up rose
Belial, in act more graceful and humane.
A fairer person lost not Heaven; he seemed
For dignity composed, and high exploit.
But all was false and hollow; though his tongue
Dropt manna, and could make the worse appear
The better reason, to perplex and dash
Maturest counsels: for his thoughts were low—
To vice industrious, but to nobler deeds
Timorous and slothful. Yet he pleased the ear,
And with persuasive accent thus began:—

It will be readily seen that at least two of the characteristics mentioned by Milton are found in Vergil. Taking into consideration the general similarity of situation in the two cases, it seems to me probable that we have here another instance of Milton's debt to the classics.

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